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UNCLAS MASERU 000365

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR AF/S - D. MOZENA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [LT](#) [OVIP](#) [HIV](#)

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF HIGH LEVEL ISSUES WITH MFA

1. (SBU) Ambassador briefed Minister of Foreign Affairs Moleleki on the brief private visit of Former President Clinton and announced that OGAC Coordinator Ambassador Randall Tobias was expected in country soon for an official visit. The Minister was pleased with the detailed coordination between the Embassy and MFA. The Minister spoke glowingly about the specific steps the USG has taken to address the HIV/AIDS problem in Lesotho and indicated that his government would try to be responsive on a number of bilateral fronts as well. In that regard, he stated that the Deputy Prime Minister had moved from a negative position concerning the Article 98 Agreement, that the Attorney General who had previously voiced legal concerns was less adamant in his stance and that the Cabinet hoped to move the Prime Minister in a more positive direction in the coming months. (Note: During July 11 meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Ambassador presented additional legal information as provided by the Department to the Minister for his review and for the review of his legal advisors. End Note.)

2. (SBU) In light of the high profile visits and continued work on the ground with new Embassy resources devoted to the HIV/AIDS sector, the Minister thought that the bilateral relationship had reached a new high. We responded that we are certainly committed to addressing the AIDS pandemic across Africa generally, and specifically in Lesotho. Our bilateral relationship had to be based on mutual understanding and respect and we would continue to engage the government on a range of issues. The Minister stated that he recognized the need for reciprocity and the need to be responsive to U.S. concerns as well.

3. (SBU) Comment: We expect that the positive tone of upcoming visits will benefit USG objectives. End Comment.

PERRY